
SENATE BILL 5154

State of Washington

69th Legislature

2025 Regular Session

By Senators Goehner, Bateman, and Nobles

Prefiled 01/07/25. Read first time 01/13/25. Referred to Committee on Local Government.

1 AN ACT Relating to the duties of county auditors; amending RCW
2 36.22.010, 36.22.040, 36.32.110, 36.32.440, and 5.44.070; adding new
3 sections to chapter 36.32 RCW; and repealing RCW 36.22.020 and
4 36.22.120.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

6 **Sec. 1.** RCW 36.22.010 and 2009 c 337 s 3 are each amended to
7 read as follows:

8 The county auditor:

9 (1) Shall be recorder of deeds and other instruments in writing
10 which by law are to be filed and recorded in and for the county for
11 which he or she is elected, and all other duties prescribed in Title
12 65 RCW;

13 (2) Shall keep an account current with the county treasurer,
14 charge all money received as shown by receipts issued and credit all
15 disbursements paid out according to the record of settlement of the
16 treasurer with the legislative authority;

17 (3) Shall make out and transmit to the state auditor a statement
18 of the state fund account with the county in accordance with
19 standards developed by the state auditor. The statement must be
20 available to the public;

1 (4) Shall make available a complete exhibit of the prior-year
2 finances of the county including, but not limited to, a statement of
3 financial condition and financial operation in accordance with
4 standards developed by the state auditor. This exhibit shall be made
5 available after the financial records are closed for the prior year;

6 (5) Shall make out a register of all warrants legally authorized
7 and directed to be issued by the legislative body at any regular or
8 special meeting. The auditor shall make the data available to the
9 county treasurer. The auditor shall retain the original of the
10 register of warrants for future reference;

11 ~~(6) ((As clerk of the board of county commissioners, shall:
12 Record all of the proceedings of the legislative authority;
13 Make full entries of all of their resolutions and decisions on
14 all questions concerning the raising of money for and the allowance
15 of accounts against the county;~~

16 ~~Record the vote of each member on any question upon which there
17 is a division or at the request of any member present;~~

18 ~~Sign))~~ Shall sign all orders made and warrants issued by order of
19 the legislative authority for the payment of money;

20 ((Record)) (7) Shall record the reports of the county treasurer
21 of the receipts and disbursements of the county;

22 ~~((Preserve and file all accounts acted upon by the legislative
23 authority;~~

24 ~~Preserve and file all petitions and applications for franchises
25 and record the action of the legislative authority thereon;~~

26 ~~Record all orders levying taxes;~~

27 ~~Perform all other duties required by any rule or order of the
28 legislative authority.))~~ (8) Shall prepare a budget pursuant to RCW
29 36.40.010 through 36.40.050;

30 (9) May hire an internal auditor or assign internal auditor tasks
31 to an employee of the auditor, who operates independently;

32 (10) Shall conduct elections pursuant to Title 29A RCW;

33 (11) May serve as an agent of the department of licensing
34 pursuant to Title 46 RCW; and

35 (12) May perform other duties, by mutual agreement with the
36 county commissioners, through a memorandum of understanding.

37 **Sec. 2.** RCW 36.22.040 and 2009 c 549 s 4024 are each amended to
38 read as follows:

1 The county auditor or financial officer designated in a charter
2 county shall audit all claims, disbursements, transfers, demands, and
3 accounts against the county which by law are chargeable to the
4 county, except such cost or fee bills as are by law to be examined or
5 approved by some other judicial tribunal or officer. The county
6 auditor shall audit all transfers involving restricted funds held by
7 the county. Such claims as it is his or her duty to audit shall be
8 presented to the board of county commissioners for their examination
9 and allowance.

10 **Sec. 3.** RCW 36.32.110 and 1981 c 240 s 1 are each amended to
11 read as follows:

12 (~~The county auditor shall be the clerk of the board of county~~
13 ~~commissioners unless the board of county commissioners designates~~)

14 (1) The board of county commissioners shall designate one of its
15 employees to serve as clerk who shall attend its meetings and keep a
16 record of its proceedings.

17 (2) The clerk of the board of county commissioners shall:

18 (a) Record all of the proceedings of the legislative authority;

19 (b) Make full entries of all of their resolutions and decisions
20 on all questions concerning the raising of money for and the
21 allowance of accounts against the county;

22 (c) Record the vote of each member on any question upon which
23 there is a division or at the request of any member present;

24 (d) Preserve and file all accounts acted upon by the legislative
25 authority;

26 (e) Preserve and file all petitions and applications for
27 franchises and record the action of the legislative authority
28 thereon;

29 (f) Record all orders levying taxes; and

30 (g) Perform all other duties required by any rule or order of the
31 legislative authority.

32 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** A new section is added to chapter 36.32
33 RCW to read as follows:

34 (1) It is the duty of the clerk of the board of county
35 commissioners, within 15 days after the adjournment of each regular
36 session, to publish a summary of the proceedings of the legislative
37 authority in any newspaper published in the county or having a

1 general circulation therein or the clerk may post copies of such
2 proceedings in three of the most public places in the county.

3 (2) The seal of the county commissioners for each county, used by
4 the clerk of the board of county commissioners to attest the
5 proceedings of the legislative authority, shall be and remain in the
6 custody of the clerk, and the clerk is hereby authorized to use such
7 seal in attestation of all official acts.

8 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** A new section is added to chapter 36.32
9 RCW to read as follows:

10 In case the clerk of the board of county commissioners is unable
11 to attend to the duties of his or her office during any session of
12 the board of county commissioners and has no deputy appointed in
13 attendance, the board may temporarily appoint a suitable person not
14 by law disqualified from acting as such to perform the duties of the
15 clerk.

16 **Sec. 6.** RCW 36.32.440 and 1974 ex.s. c 171 s 3 are each amended
17 to read as follows:

18 The board of county commissioners of the several counties may
19 employ such staff as deemed appropriate to assist with budgetary
20 preparations as set forth in RCW 36.40.010 through 36.40.050 and to
21 serve the several boards directly in matters including but not
22 limited to purchasing, poverty and relief programs, parks and
23 recreation, emergency services, ((budgetary preparations set forth in
24 RCW ~~36.40.010-36.40.050,~~)) code enforcement and general
25 administrative coordination. Such authority shall in no way infringe
26 upon or relieve the county auditor of responsibilities contained in
27 RCW 36.22.010 ~~((9) and 36.22.020)~~.

28 **Sec. 7.** RCW 5.44.070 and Code 1881 s 2737 are each amended to
29 read as follows:

30 Copies of all deeds or other instruments of writing, maps,
31 documents and papers which by law are to be filed or recorded in the
32 office of ~~((said))~~ the county auditor, and all transcripts or
33 exemplifications of the records of the proceedings of the board of
34 county commissioners certified ~~((by said auditor))~~ under official
35 seal, shall be admitted as prima facie evidence in all the courts of
36 this state.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 8.** The following acts or parts of acts are
2 each repealed:

3 (1) RCW 36.22.020 (Publisher of legislative authority proceedings
4 —Custodian of commissioners' seal) and 1995 c 194 s 2 & 1963 c 4 s
5 36.22.020; and

6 (2) RCW 36.22.120 (Temporary clerk may be appointed) and 2009 c
7 549 s 4026 & 1963 c 4 s 36.22.120.

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